

Smarter Balanced – Looking Forward

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Montana's Assessment

- **A Better Test for Today's Students**

Smarter Balanced replaces each state's end-of-year standardized tests, and the results from this first operational year set a new baseline for student achievement.

- **Measures Critical Thinking**

Students need to think critically and know how to problem solve to be successful in their choice of college and career. Smarter Balanced, unlike previous tests, requires students to write, think critically, and use evidence to support why they gave a certain answer.

- **Designed for All Students**

Smarter Balanced offers the broadest array of accessibility features ever offered in a statewide assessment—such as Braille and glossaries provided in 10 languages—allowing all students to demonstrate what they know and can do.

Montana's Assessment (cont.)

- **Engaging and Interactive**

Students live in a world filled with technology. Unlike the bubble tests of the past, Smarter Balanced is administered online. Smarter Balanced uses computer adaptive technology to customize the test for each student.

- **Created by Educators**

More than 4,700 educators have contributed to the development and continuous improvement of Smarter Balanced as a resource to improve teaching and learning. Educators use Smarter Balanced as a tool to help students meet their academic goals.

Historic Achievement

- First time states have collaborated to deploy an assessment of this magnitude
- First large scale adaptive assessment to include hand-score items and performance tasks
- First time most of the vendors worked together to pool their talent
- The assessment with the greatest number of supports for students
- Millions of students had taken the test in 2015
- First comprehensive information about college and career ready standards

Issues

- Some students and teachers were frustrated
- Conducting a systemic evaluation of the data to ensure it provides meaningful information about what students know and can do
- Changes in place to improve the system

Open Source Technology

- Designed based on core technology that has been used operationally
- Software was built and modified over the course of 4 years and was delivered late.
- Makes available technology that was previously only proprietary
- In the long term, gives states the opportunity to administer their assessment without requiring students and teachers to learn new systems.
- Is governed by states. States are in charge of enhancements.

Why are the results different?

- The Content Standards are still new. Teachers are just now getting standardized feedback. We need to be patient as teachers adjust their instruction and fill in gaps that students have- especially for older students.
- The Content Standards ask a lot of students and teachers. Based on prior history, teachers and students will improve teaching and learning, respectively.
- The new Assessments ask a lot of students and measures critical thinking and problem solving. Students need to read complex texts, write well organized analytical essays incorporating complex texts into their analyses. Students also need to solve complex mathematic problems and describe their reasoning.

Why are the results different? (cont.)

- The Achievement Levels are pegged at the level of rigor required for students to have the content knowledge necessary to access to the full array of options after high school (military and other careers, as well as college).

Prepping for Next Year

- Were there any changes to school or district or policies that may change what you do and/or how you do it?
- Are there any adults that have left the school or district? Is their position being filled? If not, who will serve their role?
- ***Implementation Guide:***
<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Usability-Accessibility-and-Accommodations-Implementation-Guide.pdf>

Considerations for Upcoming Year

- Students should have an opportunity practice on the form and format of the test
- Students should have enough time to complete the test
- Track which students completed their tests
- Ensure students get the right supports and accommodations

<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/introduction-individual-student-assessment-accessibility-profile-isaap-updated>

Ongoing Questions

- Who is responsible for analyzing summative assessment results?
 - What is the degree of our achievement gap?
 - Did the “rank order” of the data change?
 - What is the consistency of other available data that can also describe students’ knowledge and skills?

<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/understanding-smarter-balanced-individual-student-report>

<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/planning-curriculum-my-students-using-smarter-balanced-score-reports-and-resources>

Ongoing Questions

Who is responsible for summative assessment results?

- Is the achievement gap different in ELA vs Math?
 - Is there a difference in instruction that can explain the pattern?
 - Is the difference indicative of students' language proficiency?
 - Can the disaggregated data for EL and formerly EL students provide additional insight?
- Are there instructional programs that seem to be more effective than others?

The Digital Library May Hold the Answers

- **The Assessment Literacy** modules are 15-minute interactive professional learning experiences. They build educator knowledge and skills to effectively use evidence from a balanced system of summative assessments, interim assessments, and the formative assessment process to improve teaching and learning.
- **The Instructional modules** are also 15-minute interactive experiences. They demonstrate the formative assessment process with an instructional task aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts/literacy or mathematics. The tasks were selected because they represent an important shift or a key grade-level focus in the CCCSS. Most topics are part of a comprehensive package of four modules, one featuring each formative assessment attribute.

For New Administrators

- *Understanding the Smarter Balanced Assessment System*
 - This module is assessment literacy 101. In addition, at the end of the sections that describe each of the 3 components of the system, there is a summary of what that component does and does not do/how that component can and cannot be used.

<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/understanding-smarter-balanced-assessment-system>

Digging A Little Deeper

- *Using the Smarter Balanced Score Reporting System Data: District Leaders.*
<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/using-smarter-balanced-reporting-system-data-district-leaders>
- *Using the Smarter Balanced Score Reporting System Data: School Leaders.*
<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/using-smarter-balanced-reporting-system-data-school-leaders>
- *Understanding why information from local assessments may differ from the summative and interim results*
<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/evaluating-classroom-assessments>

Digging Even Deeper

New Interpretative Guides

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caasppsreports.asp>

Really Understand the Results

- ***Content Specifications*** describe how the content is bundled together into targets
 - **1. KEY DETAILS:** Use explicit details and implicit information from the text to support answers or basic inferences
Standards: RL-1, RL-3 (DOK 1, DOK 2)
 - **RL-1** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text
 - **RL-3** Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

Really Understand the Results

- *Understanding the Smarter Balanced Mathematics Content Specifications.*
<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/understanding-smarter-balanced-mathematics-content-specifications>
- *Understanding the Smarter Balanced ELA Content Specifications.*
<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/understanding-smarter-balanced-elaliteracy-content-specifications>

Really Understand the Results

Item specifications describe how specific targets are measured

Task Description:

- The item stem will make an inference or draw a conclusion based on the text and pose a question that requires the student to select the text evidence that supports the given inference or conclusion.

Item Specs (continued)

Task Description:

- The answer choices will present four options. Options that are paraphrased will be of similar structure. The correct answer will be a direct excerpt or a paraphrase of the text that provides support for the given inference or conclusion. The distractors will be direct excerpts or paraphrases of text content that may be plausible to students who
 1. misinterpret details in the text
 2. make erroneous inferences or judgments about the given inference/conclusion about the text
 3. apply faulty reasoning about the text.

Item Specs (continued)

- Distractors will reflect common student errors. Rationales should state the justification for the type of plausible distractor.

Target Evidence Statement:

- The student will identify text evidence (explicit details and/or implicit information) to support a GIVEN inference or conclusion based on the text.

Appropriate Stems:

- Which [detail/sentence/line] from the passage best supports [provide inference or conclusion based on the passage]?
- [Provide inference or conclusion based on the passage]. Which [detail/sentence/line] from the passage best supports this [inference/conclusion] OR best shows [provide the inference/conclusion]?

Gathering More Data

Gathering more information about students' knowledge and skills through the formative assessment process.

<https://www.smarterbalancedlibrary.org/content/eliciting-evidence-formative-assessment-process-grades-9-12>